



STEVE COOLEY  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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210 WEST TEMPLE STREET LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-3210 (213) 974-3501

August 3, 2004

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**AUTHORIZE THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY TO ACCEPT GRANT FUNDS FROM THE  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA BOARD OF CORRECTIONS (BOC) FOR THE ABOLISH  
CHRONIC TRUANCY (ACT) LONG BEACH-PARAMOUNT PROGRAM  
(4th DISTRICT) (3-VOTES)**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Adopt the enclosed Resolution authorizing the District Attorney to accept grant funds, on behalf of the County of Los Angeles (County), from the State of California BOC to implement the ACT Long Beach-Paramount Program. The District Attorney's Office has been awarded \$200,000 for the period of January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004.
2. Authorize the District Attorney to execute the Grant Award Agreement, on behalf of the County of Los Angeles.
3. Authorize the District Attorney, or his designee, on behalf of the County, to serve as Project Director for the ACT Long Beach-Paramount Program, and to sign and approve any revisions to the grant award agreement that do not affect the net County cost of the agreement.
4. Authorize the District Attorney, pursuant to County Code Section 6.06.020, to hire two Hearing Officers for the ACT Long Beach-Paramount Program.

### **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The District Attorney's Office has been awarded grant funds from the State BOC in the amount of \$200,000 for the period of January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004 to implement the ACT program in the Long Beach, Paramount, Los Nietos, and Little Lake School Districts (School Districts). The goal of the ACT Program is to prevent juvenile delinquency and future adult criminality by breaking the cycle of poor school attendance and returning truant children to the schoolroom rather than the courtroom. All services provided are consistent with the laws of the State of California and the guidelines of the County and the School Districts.

A Board approved Resolution authorizing acceptance of the funding is required by the State BOC.

### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

The focus of this program supports the County's Strategic Plan Goal No. 5, Children and Families' Well-being, to improve the well-being of children and family in Los Angeles County in the areas of safety and survival, and social and emotional well-being. Acceptance of the grant funds supports the County's Strategic Plan Goal No. 4, Fiscal Responsibility, by securing an available revenue source at the Federal level.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

Grant award notification was sent by BOC on May 24, 2004. This late notification delayed the implementation of the program, however, the department will seek a grant period extension to allow the grant award amount to be fully expended. There are no costs for FY 2003-04. Funding has been included in the department's FY 2004-05 budget for six months, or \$100,000, which will fully offset program costs for the period. If an extension is granted, existing appropriation will be used and the additional \$100,000 grant revenue will be used to offset other revenue shortfalls.

If funding for this program were terminated, an evaluation would be conducted to determine whether the program would either be continued with costs absorbed by the department, or discontinued with the reallocation of staff to vacant-budgeted positions.



### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

ACT is a parental responsibility-based truancy reduction program that works with elementary schools to identify children with problem attendance, contact their parents, and provide supportive assistance to families in an effort to correct school attendance problems before juvenile court action becomes necessary.

The ACT Long Beach – Paramount Program will serve 70 elementary schools with an enrollment exceeding 75,000 students in the target area. Two District Attorney Hearing Officers (HO) will each be assigned responsibility for 35 elementary schools. The procedures of the ACT program are as follows: School attendance personnel will identify students with excessive absences. The HO will send letters to these students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) inviting them to attend a parent meeting, interpreters are provided if needed. School staff and the HO explain California's mandatory school attendance laws, parent's accountability for their child's attendance and emphasize the positive benefits of improved school attendance. If attendance does not improve, individual meetings are held by the HO with the parent, child, and the school official who comprise the School Attendance Review Team (SART) to discuss the specifics of the attendance problems and any other related issues, including legal consequences if attendance does not improve.

A contract is signed by the parent, child, HO, and school official outlining the school's responsibility to provide services or referrals for services. The parent and child are reminded that it is their duty and responsibility to improve school attendance. School personnel and the HO monitor the SART contract closely to note any non-conforming unexcused absences. If attendance continues to be poor, the parent and child are referred to a much larger group called the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) consisting of probation, law enforcement, mental health, and others.

The SARB is a community-school based program that provides intensive guidance and coordinates community service delivery for students with attendance and behavior problems. The ACT program looks for at least 15 provable unexcused absences in the preceding year, with a previous school history of absenteeism before a case is brought to SARB. This meeting serves as a last chance for parent(s) to remedy their child's attendance problem and avoid prosecution. The ACT HO and a Deputy District Attorney attend this meeting, which concludes with the signing of a SARB contract. If there is no improvement after this intervention, a Penal Code Section 272 case (contributing to the delinquency of a minor) will be prepared for filing in Superior Court.

The County has adopted and successfully implemented the ACT Program in over 30 other school districts. Los Angeles, Pomona, West Covina, Norwalk-La Mirada, and Lancaster are a few of the school districts that participate. Since its inception eleven years ago, the ACT Program has consistently resulted in improved attendance. During the 2001-2002 school year, eighty percent (80%) of the participating schools reported measurable improvement in their actual daily attendance figures as compared to the previous year. Only fifteen percent (15%) reported a slight decrease. At the close of the 2002-03 school year, fifty-seven percent (57%) of these schools reported additional improvement. While this is a smaller percentage, as compared to the previous year, it is no less impressive since over time it is reasonable to expect the rate of further improvement to slow down.

A process and outcomes evaluation, to fully document the ACT Long Beach-Paramount Program successes, will be conducted by a professional evaluation consultant. The program will strive to: 1) improve school attendance, as measured by average daily attendance rates pre- and post-program implementation; 2) have no more than 25 ACT students/parents require referral to SARB; and 3) have no more than three ACT cases referred for prosecution.

#### **IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

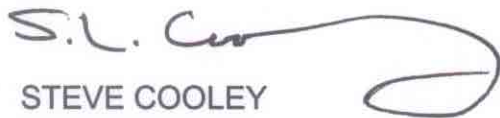
The ACT program does not propose attorney staff augmentation. Therefore, the District Attorney's Office is not subject to the Board motion of December 15, 1998, requiring clearance with Alternate Public Defender, Probation, Public Defender and Sheriff's Departments.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
August 3, 2004  
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**CONCLUSION:**

Following Board authorization to accept the grant award for this program, the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board is requested to return two copies of the adopted Board letter and approved Resolution to Albert Ablaza, Contracts and Grants Unit, Los Angeles County District Attorney, 201 North Figueroa Street, Suite 1300, Los Angeles, California 90012. Any questions may be directed to Mr. Ablaza at (213) 202-7683 or via e-mail at [aablaza@da.co.la.ca.us](mailto:aablaza@da.co.la.ca.us).

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'S.L. Cooley', followed by a large, stylized loop.

STEVE COOLEY  
District Attorney

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Enclosure

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel



**Los Angeles County Chief Administrative Office**  
**Grant Management Statement for Grants Exceeding \$100,000**

**Department:** Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

**Grant Project Title and Description**

The Abolish Chronic Truancy (ACT) Long Beach-Paramount program will serve 70 elementary schools with an enrollment exceeding 75,000 students in the Long Beach, Paramount, Los Nietos, and Little Lake School Districts. The goal of the ACT program is to prevent juvenile delinquency and future adult criminality by breaking the cycle of poor school attendance and returning children to the schoolroom rather than the courtroom.

**Funding Agency**  
State of California  
Board of Corrections

**Program (Fed. Grant # /State Bill or Code #)**  
1P02B10190

**Grant Acceptance Deadline**

**Total Amount of Grant Funding:** \$200,000

**County Match:** \$0

**Grant Period:** 1/1/04-12/31/04

**Begin Date:** January 1, 2004

**End Date:** December 31, 2004

**Number of Personnel Hired Under This Grant:**

**Full Time** 2

**PartTime**   

**Obligations Imposed on the County When the Grant Expires**

Will all personnel hired for this program be informed this is a grant-funded program? Yes ☒ No ☐

Will all personnel hired for this program be placed on temporary ("N") items? Yes ☒ No ☐

Is the County obligated to continue this program after the grant expires? Yes ☐ No ☒

If the County is not obligated to continue this program after the grant expires, the Department will:

a). Absorb the program cost without reducing other services Yes ☐ No ☒

b). Identify other revenue sources Yes ☐ No ☒

(Describe) \_\_\_\_\_

c). Eliminate or reduce, as appropriate, positions/program costs funded by the grant. Yes ☒ No ☐

**Impact of additional personnel on existing space:**

**Department Head Signature**

*S.L. Camacho*

**Date**

7/13/04

1                                   **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
2                                   **COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

3                                   **RESOLUTION**

4                                   Authorization to Accept Grant Award Funds From  
5                                   The State of California, Board of Corrections  
6                                   For the Abolish Chronic Truancy  
7                                   Long Beach/Paramount Program

8                   **WHEREAS**, the County of Los Angeles is charged with providing vital  
9 services in the area of courts, law enforcement, and adult and juvenile  
10 justice to a population in excess of ten million persons; and

11                   **WHEREAS**, the County of Los Angeles, Office of the District Attorney,  
12 is authorized, pursuant to Government Code Section 26500.5, to participate  
13 in any project or program to improve the administration of justice; and

14                   **WHEREAS**, the County of Los Angeles, acting through its Board of  
15 Supervisors, desires to establish such a program entitled the Abolish Chronic  
16 Truancy (ACT) – Long Beach/Paramount; and

17                   **WHEREAS**, the State of California, Board of Corrections (BOC) has  
18 awarded grant funds to the District Attorney's Office for the ACT – Long  
19 Beach/Paramount program for the period covering January 1, 2004 to  
20 December 31, 2004;

21                   **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the County of Los Angeles  
22 Board of Supervisors hereby approves acceptance of the grant funds in the  
23 amount of \$200,000 to be used exclusively for the designated program;

24                   **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County of Los Angeles agrees not  
25 to use the aforementioned grant funds to supplant local expenditures  
26 controlled by this body;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors of the  
County of Los Angeles hereby authorizes the District Attorney or his  
designee to serve as Project Director, on behalf of the County of Los

1 Angeles, to sign and approve on behalf of the Board of Supervisors the Grant  
2 Award Agreement including any extensions or submission of amendments,  
3 progress reports, and payment requests thereof;

4 **IT IS AGREED** that liability arising out of the performance this Grant  
5 Award Agreement, including civil court actions for damages, shall be the  
6 responsibility of the grant recipient and the authorizing agency. It is  
7 recognized that the State of California, BOC disclaims any responsibility for  
any such liability;

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**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2004.

by \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy

By Kane Brown  
Deputy